

SCO: Strengths For Pakistan

written by Hamna Seyyed | October 13, 2022



The SCO Charter strengthens regional peace and stability and regional ties in the economic, infrastructural, trade and cultural arenas, aligning neatly with Islamabad's aspiration to enhance economic connectivity and regional peace. The Samarkand Declaration of the 22nd Summit of the SCO Council of Heads of State significantly called for further cooperation among SCO member countries with a focus on countering terrorism, extremism and separatism, which is particularly important for Pakistan given the renewed threats of the TTP as the Afghan Taliban turn a blind eye. In terms of regional security, the SCO is an emerging security bloc where Pakistan has a historic opportunity to enlist the support of all SCO members in its counter-terrorism initiatives. The SCO states are well aware of Pakistan's contributions and sacrifices in countering regional radicalization. Therefore, the Samarkand Declaration emphasized the importance of consistent implementation of the Program of Cooperation of SCO Member States in the Fight against Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism for the period 2022-24, signed in 2021. Pakistan's delegation to the SCO emphasized convergence that removes conflicts and promotes peace at the regional and global levels.



Instead of devastating floods, Pakistan can seek economic assistance from major powers through the SCO and continue to prosper through trade and investment. With both Pakistan and India as members of the SCO, it can act as a leading forum in trying to resolve the Kashmir dispute between India and Pakistan, which has kept South Asia on the edge of war. To push out CPEC, India is promoting separatism, extremism and terrorism in various parts of Pakistan, which is anathema to the basic spirit of SCO. Islamabad must persuade regional countries to pressure India to work together in a partnership for peace and regional stability in South Asia in accordance with the scope and mandate of the SCO. The SCO will offer Pakistan the chance to contribute significantly to peace, stability, security, and rehabilitation on the SCO platform while concentrating on communication infrastructure, the social sector (health & education), and staff training for public sector organisations. This is an opportunity for Pakistan and India to engage together to advance the regional anti-terrorist campaign. SCO is currently a promising platform if Pakistan and India want to resolve their disputes, which they should do for the greater benefit.